

The Builder.

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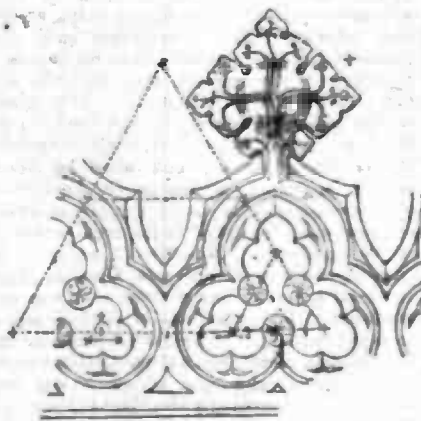
Freemasonry again this week will occupy a small portion of our columns.

We have hinted that the principal thing

at present to be done towards its restoration is the gathering together of facts and details of ancient buildings: we have now, it is true, a very large collection of publications upon ancient Gothic architecture, but, unfortunately, very few of them are treated in a freemasonic manner: to a certain extent perhaps it

is well that they should be so published at the present; for as the bias of mind in those who have put forth these works has not been trained philosophically, mischief might have resulted from the issue on their part of false dogmas upon the subject of architectural construction; but while it may thus be well that abstinence be held by these authors from any approach to authoritative assertion on a subject so all-important, we must still complain of a want in them of the right kind of information: for few of them go beyond mere outward forms; whereas we require every the most minute detail, and, above all, the exact jointing of every part of their construction; so that the reason of their holding together, or failure,—the causes of fracture, subsidence, falling from the perpendicular, or any dilapidation, may be found,—and in the copying of such examples, be avoided. A very beautiful work has been just completed, (and which we shall shortly review), denominated "*Illustrations of Baptismal Fonts*," nearly all the wood-cuts of which are most exquisitely engraved; but the subjects being in perspective, without plans or sections, the publication will serve very little towards a restoration of font-work; for, on account of the want of such details, it will in the hands of country clergymen and country masons be entrusted to the use of workmen who, not learned in such matters, will, even where they have ancient details at hand, rarely copy them, choosing rather to depend upon the resources of their own minds, which have been embodied five hundred years after the fall of really good Gothic architecture. We perceive among the examples in this work one or two which we have in our engraver's hands with the necessary details. While speaking of publications upon Gothic architecture, we must notice one, only two parts of which have at present been issued, denominated, "*An Analysis of Gothick Architecture*, illustrated by drawings made from actual measurement, of existing examples throughout England, and carefully delineated to scale, by Raphael and J. Arthur Brandon, architects." We shall also reserve ourselves for a minute review of this work

when some one department of it is complete, at present only noticing that, having the plans, sections, and details, which the other wants, it is, though more roughly executed, of far more use, and especially so from many of its plates exhibiting an attempt towards the revival of the decorative branch of Freemasonry, by the insertion of many formation lines and centres for the radiation of its different curves. This, in the examples here quoted of the flowered open para-



(Scale 1/4 inch to a foot.)

pet, or termination of the doorway, leading from the south aisle of St. Alban's Abbey to the cloisters which formerly adjoined the church, by the simple system of triangulation gives the centres for striking a figure apparently very complicated, and determines the dimensions of several parts of the work without further premeditation, thus leading to a certainty, as well as ease of operation, which can alone distinguish the true artist from the bungler. By and by it will be seen, that certain elements in a work first given, a sequence of freemasonic science directed all the rest. We doubt not that the greater part of this will be brought to light again, and as any discovery of the kind is made, we shall promulgate it to the utmost of our ability.

The subjects of this work are to be classed as 1st, Windows; 2nd, Doorways; 3rd, Porches; 4th, Buttresses; 5th, Pinnacles; 6th, Parapets, and other external features; 7th, Piers; 8th, Arches; 9th, Capitals; 10th, Bases; 11th Church furniture; the whole to be comprised in about 150 royal-quarto plates, and with an accompanying description.

It will be scarcely necessary for us to impress again the absolute necessity for these and all other delineations of architecture to contain the jointing of the masonry and all the other constructive peculiarities. In genuine architecture they are always part of the design, for where the workmen are left to form as they please such part of the work, failure is most commonly the result.

These in architecture, instead of being slurred over, frequently form the very pride of the work; for wherever concealment of them is allowed, the work is sure to be slighted, and inevitable failure thence occurs, which, being like a disease concealed within the human frame, is the more fatal,—the very intended remedies which are applied often burthening parts already too feeble, or absolutely cutting away the little inherent strength of the fabricated patient, cause still greater failure, if not absolute ruin.

There is a branch of architectural art which we do not see proposed to be touched upon in Messrs. Brandon's work, viz. the subject of vaultings, which is precisely the one relative to which we need the most information

from actual survey; and till which branch of art is thoroughly revived, we may say Gothic architecture will still be in a fallen state: buttresses and pinnacles are but members of a system, neither of these is anything by itself, and both together form only part of that system: the form of a vault, its thickness, the dimension and number of its ribs, the weight of the bosses, the size and projection of the buttresses, the situations and inclinations of their tablings,* the weight of pinnacles, and the size angle and position of flying-buttresses,—all depend upon each other:—if the curves of a vaulting be straightish and steep, the boss must be large; if a vaulting be flat, the buttresses must either project greatly or be suddenly diverged inwardly by huge pinnacles; if heavy pinnacles be placed above a clerestory, the internal piers must be more capable of sustaining weight; and in general if there be no pinnacles above the outer buttresses, those buttresses must either be of enormous solid projection, or must be separated from the walling, as at Gloucester Cathedral, and many other buildings where sufficient weight of pinnacle has not been applied to reduce the vaulting-drift within buttresses of any ordinary projection: in all such delineations, every course of the masonry, and all its vertical and other jointing should be most carefully marked and all failure should be indicated, so that the reason of it may be ascertained, whether it be from accident of foundation, from insufficiency of pinnacular weight, or whatever other cause, and in vaultings the jointing of the masonry should be also given, as also the nature of the several materials, whether chalk, or lighter ordenseer stone, and the effect which they have experienced, whether by time, pressure, extraneous injury, or other cause.



BRITISH ASSOCIATION FOR THE ADVANCEMENT OF SCIENCE.

THE fourteenth meeting of the British Association, to be held in York on the 26th inst., is to continue till Wednesday, the 2nd of October.

The objects of the British Association are to give a stronger impulse and a more systematic direction to scientific inquiry,—to promote the intercourse of those who cultivate science in different parts of the British Empire with one another, and with foreign philosophers,—to obtain a more general attention to the objects of science, and a removal of any disadvantages of a public kind which impede its progress. At the annual meetings of the association, the state of science in its various departments is taken into consideration, notices of recent scientific discoveries are brought forward for examination and discussion, and pecuniary encouragement is granted from the funds of the association for the advancement of particular researches which require such assistance, and appear likely to benefit theoretical and practical science. In the course of the last ten years, the sum of 10,000*l.* has been thus expended by the association exclusively in the advancement of science.

Amongst the eminent visitors who are expected to attend the present meetings, we may mention the names of Liebig, Lawton, Matteucci, Brewster, Faraday, Peacock, and Whewell. The hospitalities of Wentworth

* Contrary to the new dogma of Welby Pugin, the water-tablings of buttresses conforming to the catenarian curve of pressure grow steeper as they approach the ground, vide the Temple Church, and many other ancient examples; where they are otherwise, they have mostly been unskillfully renewed. The mere eye-service of making them steeper as they are farther from the ground, is unnecessary, because the elegance of their profiles can be detected from the peculiarity of not being mirrored all round the work, but with the molded and table-work usually cut off perpendicularly at their sides.